Pemberton Urban District Council.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

February, 1897.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my 23rd Annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 1896, together with Forms A and B required by the Local Government Board, and Forms A, B, and C required by the County Council, with a table of the rainfall during the year taken at the Council's Waterworks, and a classified statement of cases of infectious disease notified during each month of the year. As the result of systematic inspection to this report is also appended a summary of the proceedings taken and advice given on the influences likely to affect the public health injuriously.

The births total 839 as compared with 893 for 1895, the average for the past ten years being 786.

Of the 839—431 were males and 408 females, the figures for each quarter and each half-year being as under:—

	Males.	Females.	Totals.
1st quarter	127	115	242
2nd „	118	85	203
3rd „	77	96	173
4th „	109	112	221
1st half-year	245	200	445
2nd „	186	208	394

The highest number (90) was registered in January, the lowest (49) in July.

The birth-rate is 40·2, as compared with 43·3 for the previous year, which is about the average rate for the past ten years.

The deaths total 401 as compared with 381 for 1895, the average for the past ten years being 378. Of the 401—215 were males and 186 females, the figures for each quarter being as under:—

1st quarter	81
2nd „	89
3rd „	89
4th „	142

The highest number was registered in November (62), and the lowest in September (22).

The death-rate is 19·7, one over the previous year, and about the same under the average for the ten preceding years.

The Zymotic-rate 3·6, Diarrhœa ·62, Phthisis ·91, Respiratory 3·84. The rate of infant mortality in proportion of deaths under one year to 1,000 births is 168 deaths, or one death to every six births. Of these 110 died under six months. The total number of deaths, two years of age and under, is 217.

The diseases prevalent during the year were Measles, Scarlet Fever (178 cases), Whooping Cough, Enteric Fever (22 cases), Diphtheria (7 cases), and Croup (2 cases).

The inquest cases were below the average, there being only 8 during the year and none from colliery accidents.

No deaths were registered from Typhus, Continued or Relapsing Fevers, Ague, or Cholera.

Influenza—1 death at Worsley Mesnes with Pneumonia and 1 at Scot Lane with Hæmoptysis, both in October, and both at the extremes of life.

There have been 19 deaths from Phthisis (1 under 5 years), as against 17 last year; and in the lowlying portions of the district, 19 from Heart Disease, and 78 from Bronchitis and Pneumonia. Of the latter, 40 were under and 38 over five years of age. Rheumatic Fever caused 2 deaths, at 19 and 13 years of age.

Measles caused 33 deaths, compared with 5 for the year before. There were very few cases in the first month, but afterwards a gradual increase in West Ward, where the schools were closed for three weeks on my advice, and thoroughly cleansed and disinfected; later, the disease spread to Goose Green, where the schools were also closed for three weeks and cleaned. All the schools in the district were cleaned down and floors thoroughly washed about the same time.

Of Measles 13 died, from Pneumonia 10, and Convulsions 3, all under two years of age; nine from Goose Green and four from Central Ward, immediately after the sudden atmospheric change to damp and cold, when over half the deaths for the month were at the extremes of life, and one-fourth from Zymotic Disease which decreased at the end of the year.

Whooping Cough was found at Newtown in June, increased in July, causing two deaths in one house in Scot Lane in September, then almost disappearing towards the end of the year. School teachers were advised to send home all children from houses infected with Scarlet Fever, Measles, and Whooping Cough, and handbills were distributed throughout the district stating the precautions to be taken to prevent the spread of Scarlet Fever and Measles.

There were four deaths from Enteric Fever as compared with two in the year before. Four cases from two houses, and one death took place in West Ward. On enquiry it was found that milk had been supplied from a farm outside the district where the fever existed. I called the attention of the Medical Officer of Health of the district to the same.

Erysipelas, Diphtheria, and Croup caused eleven deaths, a large number in proportion to the number of cases notified, viz: 41.

Scarlet Fever.—There is an increase in the number of deaths over the previous year, ten as compared with five, (two in the first month) located at Kitt Green and Lamberhead Green. The people in these districts will not consent to removal to hospital; for the most part they were isolated cases. One died in September, two in one house in Scot Lane in October, two in November, and two in December; the latter in the West Ward where the disease seemed to be on the decrease at the end of the year.

Diarrhœa caused thirteen deaths, chiefly in the low lying parts of the district, as in the previous year when eleven deaths occurred.

Great improvements of late years have been made in the streets and roads yet many of the backyards require flagging or paving Scavenging has apparently been well carried out. There has been throughout the year a plentiful supply of good water which has been secured at great expense to the district.

Bakehouses, cowsheds, and slaughter houses have been regularly inspected and are satisfactory.

As usual a large percentage of deaths are among very young children, which in my opinion is due in a great measure to improper feeding on starchy foods and such like before the child can assimulate this class of food, the giving of too great a quantity at one time, a want of cleanliness generally, and particularly of the feeding bottles and tubes causing sickness, vomiting, purging, and eventually resulting in wasting disease and death.

On Sunday the 26th of January, information was received of an outbreak of Small Pox at Worsley Mesnes, (and I may here say that credit is due to the Medical Practitioner for the prompt manner in which he notified the case). The case was that of a woman who had been confined about four days previously. I at once visited the place with the Nuisance Inspector and arranged for the instant removal of the mother to hospital. The father was removed to hospital the following day, and the child three days afterwards. The child was vaccinated two days before removal to hospital, and died six days after admission, and was interred the day after death.

I vaccinated those left behind, and advised that the surrounded property should be specially cleaned and disinfected. Neighbours were warned to keep away from the spot. The house was fumigated, and clothing stoved, and bed, &c. burnt. There was no further spread of the disease.

On February 5th I sent special reports to the Local Government Board and County Council as required by the regulations.

As the outcome of frequent and systematic inspection of the District, there was noticed and work done as follows :—

1st Quarter.

Untrapped and defective house drains at Newtown, Lamberhead Green, and Spring Bank, and also several cases of stopped drains. These defects were ultimately remedied, in one case the drains being relaid, and a new connection made with the main sewer.

Wet and dilapidated ashpits and privies at Lamberhead Green, Goose Green, and Worsley Mesnes. Notices were served.

Houses requiring limewashing at Lamberhead Green, Newtown, and Goose Green; notices for which were served and afterwards complied with.

Houses without drainage in Billinge Road, and defective rain water-spouts at Lamberhead Green.

Sewer ventilator rendered in-operative at Kitt Green by the stoppage of the drain, which was immediately remedied.

2nd Quarter.

Wet and dilapidated privies and ashpits at Newtown, Highfield, and Goose Green, reconstructed and others repaired. Defective rain waterspouts on property at Little Lane and Goose Green.

Notices served for the limewashing of certain dwelling-houses at Goose Green which were complied with.

Paving and cementing round house gully traps at Goose Green, and defective flagging in urinal at the same place, remedied after notice.

A number of stoppages and minor defects of house drains and nuisance from smoke from brickworks reported upon.

3rd Quarter.

Defective rain waterspouts at Lamberhead Green, Goose Green, and Little Lane reported upon and notices served.

Dwelling-houses overcrowded at Marsh Green, and others requiring limewashing at Newtown, Lamberhead Green, Little Lane, Marsh Green, and Worsley Mesnes.

Nuisances arising from dilapidated ashpits at Newtown and Goose Green, and notices served for abatement.

A number of stoppages of house drains rectified.

4th Quarter.

Houses requiring limewashing at Newtown, Goose Green, and Lamberhead Green, for which notices were served. Nuisances arising from dilapidated and wet ashpits at Goose Green and Rose Hill.

Defective house drains and rainwater spouts at Park Lane and Spring Bank, and house roof out of repair at Smithy Brook.

Poultry and pigeon keeping in dwelling-houses at Thwaites Delf and Marsh Green, and notices served for the abatement of the nuisances.

A number of overcrowded dwelling-houses and other defects at Marsh Green and Lamberhead Green as a result of house to house inspection.

Several stoppages of house drains and houses without sufficient drainage at Newtown.

The house gully traps throughout the district were cleaned and disinfected by the Council's own men who have also removed and burnt a considerable number of old chaff beds and mattresses at the sewage works.

A large number of house chimney flues have been swept by the Council's man, and several cases of firing have been dealt with.

Twenty-five privies and eleven ashpits have been reconstructed and roofed, and others have been repaired and altered to render contents dry.

The ashpits emptied during the year number 4,067, against 3,865 in 1895.

Considerable quantities of disinfectants were supplied and used during the year, and the infected bedding and clothing from houses disinfected at the hospital, in the gas stove. A number of houses were also fumigated.

One-hundred-and-two new houses have been erected and two back to back houses have been made into one during the year.

Rainfall at the Council's Waterworks, Billinge-Higher-End, month by month, during the year ended 31st December, 1896, as compared with last year.

	1896.	1895.
January	1·11	2·73
February	·96	·23
March	4·85	3·23
April	1·52	2·16
May	·64	1·14
June	3·25	1·57
July	3·39	4·99
August	3·19	4·01
September	7·58	1·38
October	4·46	4·83
November	1·34	3·10
December	3·89	3·26
	36·18	32·63

The certificates of infectious disease received during the year 1896, are classified as under :—

Month.	Small Pox.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Typhus Fever.	Continued Fever.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Total.	North Ward	South Ward.	East Ward.	West Ward.	Central Ward.
January	3	14	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	20	2	8	3	6	1
February	—	19	5	—	—	3	—	2	—	29	7	3	—	13	6
March	—	21	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	27	3	1	—	15	8
April	—	13	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	16	4	—	—	8	4
May	—	11	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	13	4	—	—	5	4
June	—	10	—	—	—	3	—	1	—	14	6	—	—	2	6
July	—	5	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	7	4	1	—	2	—
August	—	8	1	1	—	3	—	—	—	13	3	—	—	4	6
September	—	19	2	—	—	4	—	—	—	25	3	4	—	12	6
October	—	25	2	—	—	2	—	1	—	30	6	8	2	6	8
November	—	14	1	1	—	6	—	—	1	23	2	4	1	8	8
December	—	19	3	1	1	6	2	1	—	33	5	6	6	9	7
	3	178	22	3	1	32	2	7	2	250	49	35	12	90	64

	Small Pox.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Typhus Fever.	Continued. Fever.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Total.
N'th Ward	—	38	1	1	—	7	—	2	—	49
South ,,	—	23	1	1	—	6	1	3	—	35
East ,,	3	6	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
West ,,	—	67	13	—	—	8	1	—	1	90
Cent'l ,,	—	44	4	1	1	11	—	2	1	64
	3	178	22	3	1	32	2	7	2	250

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. HARTLEY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.